

Richard is quite the everyday comedian, telling friends and neighbors that breathing gives him the most pleasure. If he had his life to do over again, Richard said he would get more education, and his advice to young people today is to always do things in moderation and be conservative.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Richard Riedel for reaching his 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as him.

“THE PATERSON GREAT FALLS
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
ACT”

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce the “Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park Act” as my first act in the 111th Congress. This bipartisan legislation was approved by the House in October 2007, and would designate a National Park at the majestic Great Falls in Paterson, NJ. I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation as soon as possible.

Fifteen miles west of New York City, the Great Falls was the second largest waterfall in colonial America. No other natural wonder in America has played such an important role in our nation's historic quest for freedom and prosperity. At the Great Falls, Alexander Hamilton conceived and implemented a plan to harness the force of water to power the new industries that would secure our economic independence.

Hamilton told Congress and the American people that at the Great Falls he would begin implementation of his ambitious strategy to transform a rural agrarian society dependent upon slavery into a modern economy based on freedom. True to Hamilton's vision, Paterson became a great manufacturing city, producing the Colt revolver, the first submarine, the aircraft engine for the first trans-Atlantic flight, more locomotives than any city in the Nation, and more silk than any city in the world.

New Jersey's Great Falls is the only National Historic District that includes both a National Natural Resource and a National Historic Landmark. In a special Bicentennial speech in Paterson with the spectacular natural beauty of the Great Falls in the background, the late President Gerald R. Ford said, “We can see the Great Falls as a symbol of the industrial might which helps to make America the most powerful Nation in the world.”

Preeminent Hamilton biographers, an esteemed former Smithsonian Institution curator, the former chief of the National Park Service Historic American Engineering Record, and distinguished professors at Yale, Princeton, Harvard, NYU, Brown and other universities have filed letters with the National Park Service strongly recommending a National Historic Park for the Great Falls Historic District. Editorial boards, Federal, State, and local officials and community groups have also endorsed the campaign to award a National Park Service designation to the Falls.

Scholars have concluded that Pierre L'Enfant's innovative water power system in

Paterson, and many factories built later, constitute the finest remaining collection of engineering and architectural structures representing each stage of America's progress from a weak agrarian society to a leader in the global economy. It is a little known fact that L'Enfant was hired by Hamilton to create Paterson as the sister city to Washington, DC, having completed his plan of Washington only months before arriving in Paterson.

Madam Speaker, Congress must act now to pass this vital piece of legislation, so that we may fully recognize these cultural and historic landmarks that have played such a seminal role in America's history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this Chamber today. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall votes 1 and 4; “nay” on rollcall vote 3; and for Rep. NANCY PELOSI (CA-08) on rollcall vote 2 for the election of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

ISRAEL'S MILITARY ACTION IN
GAZA

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, for the past several years, Israelis living near Gaza have endured a continual state of fear due to the thousands of rocket attacks launched from there by Hamas. When the six-month cease fire between Hamas and Israel recently ended, Hamas responded almost immediately by firing more than 70 missiles at civilian targets within Israel. On December 27th, Israel, in an act of self defense, struck at Hamas targets in Gaza in response to these continued attacks, and I want to express my strong support for Israel's right of self-defense.

Israel has taken meaningful steps in recent years to push the peace process forward, including unilaterally withdrawing from Gaza in 2005. Unfortunately, Hamas has not met Israel's efforts towards a peaceful coexistence, and has instead increased military operations against its neighbor and continues to deny Israel's right to exist.

These unfortunate developments are tragic, but have been precipitated by Hamas' aggression. Hamas must stop the rocket attacks and all parties in the region need to commit to renewing efforts at peace. The U.S. should remain involved in the peace process and I will continue to work with my colleagues in Congress towards this goal.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DIS-
TRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSE
VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing, I believe for the last time, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act, simultaneously with our Senate partners, Senators JOE LIEBERMAN and ORIN HATCH. The bill we introduce today also will add two permanent House seats, the first increase in 96 years. It therefore carries a triple bonus: the first vote for the District of Columbia after 212 years, an additional seat for Utah, and two new permanent seats for the House of Representatives itself. The citizens of the District of Columbia are deeply grateful for the persistent partnership and a bipartisan dedication that Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator HATCH continue to bring to this bill, and for the continued support of Utah Governor Jon Huntsman.

Because of the importance to the city of achieving the vote after more than two centuries, the D.C. Voting Rights Act is my first bill of the 111th Congress. This year we introduce the bill as members of the armed services from the District of Columbia are again engaged in war abroad. In gratitude for the service of our residents serving today, and of those who have served since our country was founded, I dedicate the bill this year to the first soldier from the District to die for his country in the Iraq War, 21-year-old D.C. National Guard Specialist, Daryl Dent, and to the District's first unknown soldier to die after he picked up arms to fight for liberation on the promise of taxation without representation. Although two centuries apart, the first to die in these wars had in common fighting for the vote. Our first residents here fought in the War for Independence. Specialist Dent gave his life ensuring the vote for Iraqi citizens, a right he did not live to get for himself.

Today's bill is the first in the Free and Equal series of bills that I will introduce this session to complete the full roster of citizenship rights the residents of the Nation's capital, that the first soldiers were promised and for which today's soldiers continue to give their lives. There can be no doubt that the revolutionaries who invented America's most quoted national slogan did not create a new nation in order to get the vote, only to turn around and deny the vote to the citizens of their capital.

This bill was passed by the House in the 110th Congress, thanks to Speaker NANCY PELOSI who has long fought for the rights of D.C. residents and personally insisted that this legislation go forward as a bill of historic importance, Majority Leader STENY HOYER, my long-time regional friend, who has been an especially outspoken champion of this bill; Judiciary Chairman JOHN CONYERS, who gave the bill his priority attention, emblematic of the strong support he always has brought to our rights throughout his long service in Congress; and Chairman HENRY WAXMAN, who as ranking member and then as chair of the Oversight and Government Reform committee, also was a central figure in ensuring passage; and many others among my colleagues in both chambers and both parties, who have made special efforts for passage of the D.C. House